

November 22nd, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader
The Honorable Harry Reid, Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Chairman
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Vice-Chairwoman
United States Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman
The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Reid, Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Pelosi, Chairman Cochran, Vice-Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

On November 14th and 15th, municipal leaders from more than 60 cities gathered in New York City to discuss lifesaving mental health reforms taking place across America. Mayors, Police Chiefs, and Health Commissioners highlighted their successes in changing the culture, acting early, closing treatment gaps, partnering with communities, using data better, and strengthening government's ability to lead around mental health. With at least one in five Americans experiencing a mental health disorder in any given year, this impacts all of our communities. Federal action is critical to achieving better and more innovative care, as local investment alone cannot overcome this challenge.

We applaud the House of Representatives for passing H.R. 2646 The Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, and call on the Senate to do the same before the end of the 114th Congress. This legislation will strengthen leadership and accountability for care programs, promote increased access to mental health care, take important steps to improve patient care, provide new mental health and substance misuse block grants, increase federal support for evidence based practices, and direct the federal government to clarify the appropriate use and disclosure of protected health information. We urge Congress to make every effort to pass H.R. 2646 this year as a stand-alone bill or as a part of other legislation, such as H.R. 6 the 21st Century Cures Act.

Comprehensive legislative reforms will not have a lasting impact unless they are supported by robust federal funding. We also call on Congress to appropriate \$920 million dollars in the 2017 omnibus package to address the opioid crisis that plagues all our communities. This funding will support local government efforts to expanding naloxone distribution through clinical settings and emergency first responders, to increase access to evidence-based opioid use disorder treatment with buprenorphine, and to implement alternatives to incarceration programs. Increasing funding in these key areas will allow our municipalities to implement innovative programs and expand access to essential substance misuse care and treatment, ultimately save lives in our communities.

We are united in urging you to address these priorities before the conclusion of the 114th Congress. Congressional action would directly benefit millions of our citizens impacted by the mental health care system in our country. We look forward to partnering with you moving forward in reforming our mental health care system for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York, NY
Sylvester Turner, Mayor of Houston, TX
Jim Kenney, Mayor of Philadelphia, PA
Greg Stanton, Mayor of Phoenix, AZ
Ed Lee, Mayor of San Francisco, CA
Steve Adler, Mayor of Austin, TX
Greg Fischer, Mayor of Louisville, KY
Jim Strickland, Mayor of Memphis, TN
Muriel Bowser, Mayor of Washington, DC
Megan Barry, Mayor of Nashville, TN
Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Mayor of Baltimore, MD
Martin “Marty” Walsh, Boston, MA
Edward “Ed” Murray, Mayor of Seattle, WA
Michael Hancock, Mayor of Denver, CO
Charlie Hales, Mayor of Portland, OR
Carolyn G. Goodman, Mayor of Las Vegas, NV
Mick Cornett, Mayor of Oklahoma City, OK
Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor of Tucson, AZ
Darrell Steinberg, Mayor-elect of Sacramento, CA
Robert Garcia, Mayor of Long Beach, CA
John Giles, Mayor of Mesa, AZ
Libby Schaaf, Mayor of Oakland, CA
Betsy Hodges, Mayor of Minneapolis, MN
Mitch Landrieu, Mayor of New Orleans, LA
Jeff Williams, Mayor of Arlington, TX
Francis Slay, Mayor of St. Louis, MO
William Peduto, Mayor of Pittsburgh, PA
Jim Gray, Mayor of Lexington, KY
Paula Hicks-Hudson, Mayor of Toledo, OH
Steve Fulop, Mayor of Jersey City, NJ
Buddy Dyer, Mayor of Orlando, FL
Pete Saenz, Mayor of Laredo, TX
William Bell, Mayor of Birmingham, AL
Mark Stodala, Mayor of Little Rock, AR
Jackie Biskupski, Mayor of Salt Lake City, UT
Andrew Gillum, Mayor of Tallahassee, FL
Joseph Petty, Mayor of Worcester, MA
Madeline Rogero, Mayor of Knoxville, TN
Mark Mitchell, Mayor of Tempe, AZ
Tony Yarber, Mayor of Jackson, MS
Mark Holland, Mayor of Kansas City, KS
Nan Whaley, Mayor of Dayton, OH
Allison Silberberg, Mayor of Alexandria, VA
Steve Benjamin, Mayor of Columbia, SC
Luke Bronin, Mayor of Hartford, CT
John Tecklenburg, Mayor of Charleston, SC

Ed Pawlowski, Mayor of Allentown, PA
Tim Mahoney, Mayor of Fargo, ND
Denise Simmons, Mayor of Cambridge, MA
Pete Buttigieg, Mayor of South Bend, IN
Ken D. Miyagishima, Mayor of Las Cruces, NM
Setti Warren, Mayor of Newton, MA
Scott Fadness, Mayor of Fishers, IN
Bobby Hopewell, Mayor of Kalamazoo, MI
Javier Gonzales, Mayor of Santa Fe, NM
Richard Thomas, Mayor of Mount Vernon, NY
Mikkie Belvedere, Mayor of Coconut Creek, FL
Kim Bracey, Mayor of York, PA
Laurel Prussing, Mayor of Urbana, IL
Lauren Meister, Mayor of West Hollywood, CA
Jacob Day, Mayor of Salisbury, MD
Marcus Muhammad, Mayor of Benton Harbor, MI

CC:

Senator Charles E. Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Senator Lamar Alexander
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Michael Enzi
Senator Bernie Sanders
Representative Charlie Rangel
Representative Elliot Engel
Representative Joseph Crowley
Representative Carolyn Maloney
Representative Steve Israel
Representative Jose Serrano
Representative Jerry Nadler
Representative Dan Donovan
Representative Yvette Clarke
Representative Hakeem Jeffries
Representative Nydia Velazquez
Representative Gregory Meeks
Representative Grace Meng
Representative Fred Upton
Representative Frank Pallone
Representative Joe Barton
Representative Marsha Blackburn
Representative Joseph Pitts
Representative Brett Guthrie
Representative Gene Green
Representative Tim Murphy